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208 difficulty in finding eager buyers.[26]

## 4. Libraries and Cultural Centers

217 In order that financial strain may not curb the people's desire to read, the Communists in Southwest China have designed and established small libraries throughout this region to serve the workers, farmers, and shopkeepers. Libraries already in existence in larger cities were reorganized in 1949. According to anti-Communist reports, the original collections at these old libraries were all destroyed by the Communists and restocked with propaganda pamphlets. The Communist press admitted a wave of book burning in 1951-52.[27] However, that cultural disaster was said to have most seriously affected Central-South China and, to a lesser degree, East China. There has been no specific report on book destruction at any particular place in Southwest China. The small libraries established by the Reds numbered thirty-eight, with a total of 3,255,000 volumes by September 1952.[28] About twenty of those libraries were found in Szechwan Province.

• 368 The cultural center is a version of the Communist cultural palace on a smaller scale. Both are provided for Communist-conducted cultural activities such as discussion group meetings, political rallies, and reading classes. The larger

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363 26. There is no information on the exact scope of distribution of books printed in minority languages in this region. However, it has been Peking's policy to promote such distribution wherever national minorities are found. In 1951, a
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1:Stanford U. S-4, 5 1956 AF 16 SW China AF16

368 ones have facilities for showing motion pictures. Most of them have enough space for reading rooms. In September 1952, there were 294 such cultural centers open to public in Southwest China, and they were claimed to have been effective in educating the masses. It is claimed that in 1951, the cultural centers in northern Szechwan alone enabled over 9,000,000 people to receive "political propaganda," and that about 1,700,000 people attended reading classes there.[29] The official plan for 1952 was to increase the number of libraries to 2,500.[30] It is not known if this goal had been reached.

203 Mobile bookstores and libraries on wheels found in North and East China appear in Southwest China in a different manner. Lack of means of transportation in this region has forced the people to go on foot, and so a new term, "cultural couriers," for the people who work for the mobile bookstores and libraries on wheels, has been coined. Each courier carried two loads of books and periodicals on a pole on his shoulder, and travels on the back roads of the countryside. He brings the publications to the doors of the farmers, usually announcing his arrival with a gong. This mode of peddling is not new, but the goods peddled are. Large crowds

214 563 total of 2,200,000 copies of 176 different titles were printed in minority languages and distributed throughout China. These figures were increased to 4,300,000 and 376 respectively in 1952. NCNA Peking, Jan.15,1953,. quoted in SCMP, No.493, Jan.16,1953, pp.13-14.

27. Enlightenment Daily, Peking, Jan.25, '53, p3.
28. New China Daily, Sept.30,1952, p.3.
29. Ibid.
30. Ibid., Oct. 1, 1951, p. 3.